

Approved For Release

**CIA Front Groups**

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your recent editorial de-  
scription of the Central Intel-  
ligence Agency as standing  
outside the law in its capacity  
for endangering individual se-  
curity with seeming impunity,  
you overlooked mention of  
the even vaster possibilities  
for similar type damage inher-  
ent in CIA front organizations  
designed to possess the ob-  
vious advantage of appearing  
to be unconnected with covert  
activities of official inspira-  
tion. In such situations, dam-  
age to individuals is far more  
insidious if for no other rea-  
son than the additional diffi-  
culty of dragging the responsi-  
ble matrix organization into  
the publicity spotlight it must  
preferentially shun.

Composed of both agency  
operatives and "innocents"  
who are carefully recruited

for the timely exploitation of  
their professional skills to  
help mask other activities  
hardly in keeping with the  
publicly defined aims and ob-  
jectives of their apparent em-  
ployers, front organizations  
can be and too often are a  
serious menace to the individ-  
ual liberties and working ca-  
reers of their non-CIA affili-  
ated employees. Many individ-  
uals of this last category would  
doubtless have opted not to  
join such organizations if  
their true nature had been  
manifest to them at the time  
they were recruited. Other in-  
dividuals would have been  
just as content to go along  
with the acting role required  
of them and a not insignifi-  
cant number would have felt  
happier about being taken  
into the complete confidence  
of those preparing to use  
them ostensibly in connection  
with national security inter-  
ests and requirements.

The basic issue here—and it  
is but one more concerning  
which the American public is  
entitled to an answer — is  
whether or not the Central In-  
telligence Agency has any  
moral or legal basis for using  
and exploiting U.S. citizens,  
whether in the United States  
or abroad, without their prior  
knowledge and fullest consent  
in connection with covert ac-  
tivities while paying them for  
fulfilling legitimate roles the  
ultimate success of which are  
hardly ever allowed given  
their only secondary or terti-  
ary importance in relation  
to the basic purpose of the ma-  
trix organization in setting up  
its dummy front.

Worse still in its long range  
implications, perhaps, is the  
damage done to the imagery  
of legitimate organizations in  
the labor, religious, charitable  
and other fields of overseas  
activities by CIA connections  
which may range from levels  
of complete control to that of  
continuing infiltration. It is  
suggested that a courageous  
and professional investigation  
would certainly bring many  
surprises to light concerning  
the extent to which legitimate  
and well-intentioned private  
endeavors — not to mention  
those deliberately set up for  
such purposes — are being  
used in connection with sup-  
posed national security re-  
quirements and projections  
some of which at the least ap-  
pear to be both badly con-  
sidered and unproductive in their con-  
sequences.

JOSEPH J. PALISI,

Formerly of the American Insti-